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Diverse Solution

Strategies for Supporting English Learner Writing



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WHAT DO WE OFFER?

- **AN EVIDENCE-BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR ADDRESSING EL WRITING.**

The main goal of this professional development series is to provide intermediate and high school teachers with linguistic resources based on a functional grammar approach in order to support English Learners' acquisition of academic writing skills in core subject areas.

- **A MODEL FOR EVALUATING STUDENT WORK**

Through this series, teachers will learn how to critically analyze student writing in terms of grammar/mechanics **and** content. As a result, students receive more specific feedback that can guide their development.

- **EL-SENSITIVE INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Based on evaluation of student work, teachers are trained in instructional conversation and readers/writers workshop—both research-based approaches—using principles of functional grammar. Teachers are also provided with time and guided through a process of curriculum mapping to identify areas in their curricular program materials that can be augmented to align with training content.

- **TOOLS FOR PROVIDING EXPLICIT INSTRUCTION IN ACADEMIC WRITING**

A systemic approach to revision is provided to teachers, which includes a series of model lessons and instructional materials.

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR?

The major focus of functional approaches to grammar is in identifying how the patterns of language create meaning in context. Within this framework, language is not viewed as a set of discrete rules but as a resource for making meaning in a particular context where it is used. This training focuses on three perspectives of functional grammar in analyzing written language:

- **What does language reveal about what is going on in the text?** Some elements of grammar help us understand events and actors in those events.
- **How does language build the textual structure?** Other elements of grammar help us see the writer's choices of language in constructing type of text that serves a specific purpose.
- **How does language convey the writer's point of view in the text?** Other elements of grammar help us see how the writer's personal point of view is attributed to the language both implicitly and explicitly.



WHAT TEACHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE INSTITUTE?

"This is really a whole new approach to evaluating writing and using it to inform instruction (for me). I love how obvious needs become through use of the strategy charts. And see its usefulness in many forms. I'd love a chance to explore these new ideas with learners and then regroup for me ideas/discussion, etc."

"Module 2 made the most impact on my idea of teaching writing. It is where the relevancy of the theme, rheme and process began to set in and I made the connection to student feedback."

"We worked with real student samples so learning how to assess was similar to my students' work. We were given very specific tools to analyze work."

"The process of filling out the charts will help me identify work on new areas of weakness and it will really help pinpoint clearer directed lessons for areas of need."



"Allowance for hands on learning and returning to difficult concepts. Using real student samples for analysis and actual text for practice and planning."

"Teachers were encouraged and allowed to practice the skills taught. ... Facilitators were very responsive and supportive of conference attendees input and needs."



"Group/pair activities enabled participants to share their knowledge and experiences. Introduction of alternative approaches of instruction and assessment. Incorporation of actual student work as models."